

PHILLIPS

# Exhibiting Bonnard

at The Phillips Collection

## Bonnard Salon

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# Exhibiting Bonnard at The Phillips Collection

The Phillips Collection has acquired and exhibited Pierre Bonnard's paintings, prints, drawings, and photographs since the mid-1920s. Whether displayed alongside fellow members of the French collective, Les Nabis, or occupying a gallery to himself, Bonnard exhibitions at the Phillips have been essential to defining the artist's unique style.

In the early years of the museum, Duncan and Marjorie Phillips focused on upholding Bonnard to the American public and upholding his work as a leading contemporary artist. Phillips and other

critics acknowledged Bonnard's affinity for Japanese ukiyo-e prints, compared him to American and French modernists, and applauded his ability to elevate the everyday to an ethereal state. In numerous catalogue essays throughout the 1920s, Duncan Phillips referred to Bonnard as a "a whimsical artist of unmistakable genius for color."

In 1931, Phillips gave Bonnard his first solo exhibition in the United States, followed by another later that year, and one in 1933. The exhibitions reflected not only Bonnard's growing influence in the United States but

As you read, compare and contrast exhibitions past with *Bonnard's Worlds*. How does the language of today's curators echo or challenge the museum founder's view of Bonnard? What works continue to be highlighted over time? Why do you think the work of Bonnard has been used to pilot new initiatives across the museum?

also the growing Bonnard Unit. By 1933, The Phillips Collection owned 20 Bonnards.

Bonnard's works were typically hung in the Phillips House, until the opening of the Annex in 1960. A gallery on the second floor of the Annex became the Bonnard Room, with a rotating display. In 1984, the museum presented an internationally organized exhibition of Bonnard's late paintings. The exhibition was one of the first to employ a systematic multimedia marketing plan, with expansive press kits and public ads. Today, The Phillips Collection continues to host

major exhibitions of Bonnard's work, coupled with explorative methods of marketing, interpretation, and display. The Bonnard Salon draws on multiple past efforts for inspiration and is the first fully realized, collaborative space between Curatorial, Community Engagement, Education, and the Archives.

The following is a collection of exhibition ephemera, institutional records, and installation photography from The Phillips Collection Library and Archives, illustrating Bonnard exhibitions held at the museum since 1926.

# Tri-Unit Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture

1927

Preceded by *Intimate Impressionists* in 1926, the 1927 *Tri-Unit* exhibition again highlighted the importance of Bonnard to the Post-Impressionist movement. The catalogue for the exhibition features three essays on Bonnard including a reworked essay by Duncan

Phillips from the previous year, and “Since Cezanne” written by 20th-century art critic Clive Bell. Following the *Tri-Unit* exhibition Bonnard was included in another group exhibition later that year titled, *Leaders of French Art Today*.

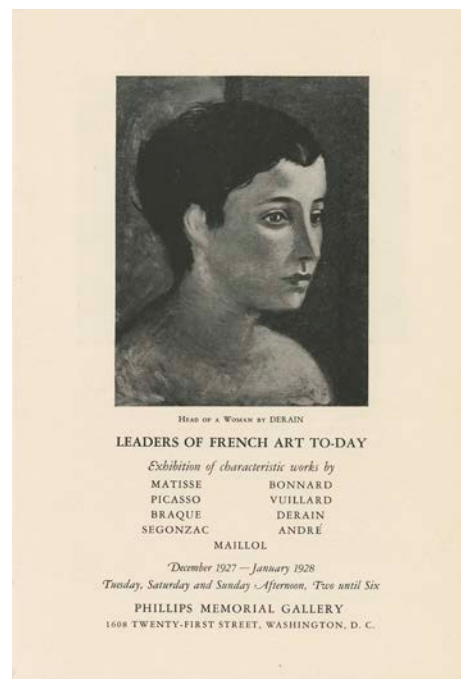
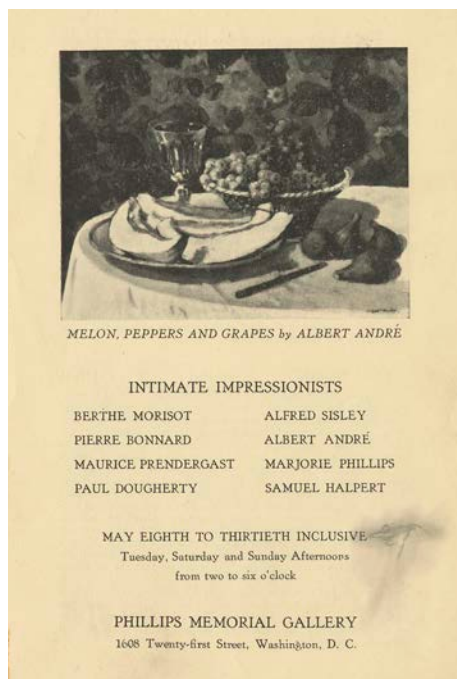
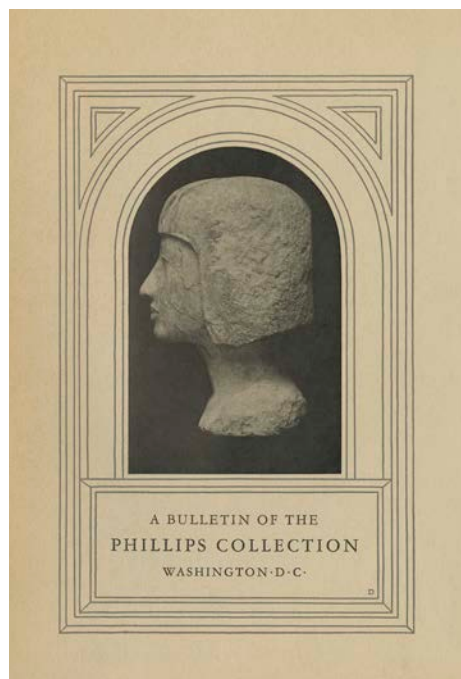
“ A whimsical artist of unmistakable genius for color whose work marks the transition between two schools of painting, between the Impressionist and the Expressionist.

DUNCAN PHILLIPS

“ Bonnard’s ambition is not to convey certain unimportant facts or obvious sentiments but to create forms that shall correspond with his intimate sense of things...Whimsical - self-critical - Bonnard comes at beauty by tortuous ways - by artful devices and elaborations.

CLIVE BELL

## Phillips Memorial Gallery Bulletins and Catalogues



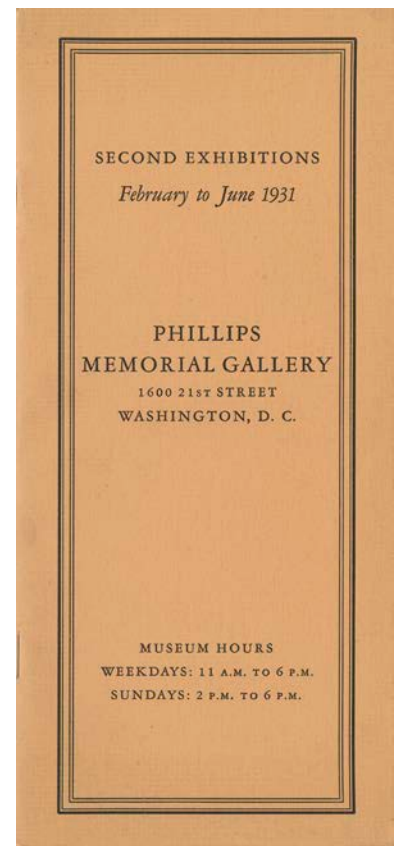
# Pierre Bonnard Installation in the Dining Room

1931

Bonnard's first solo exhibition in the United States was held in the Dining Room of The Phillips Collection in 1931. The modest exhibition featured four works acquired by the museum between 1927 and 1928.

## List of paintings in Phillips Memorial Gallery Bulletin

DINING ROOM	
97. <i>Bonnard</i>	The Palm
98. <i>Bonnard</i>	The Lesson
99. <i>Bonnard</i>	Interior with Boy
100. <i>Bonnard</i>	Morning Over the Roofs



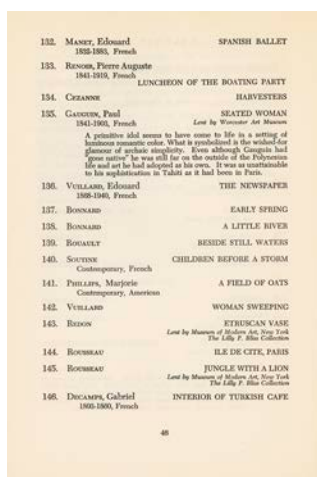
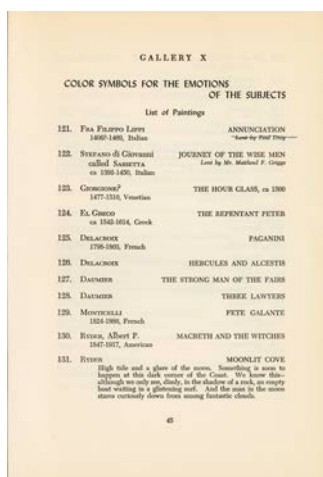
# The Functions of Color in Painting: An Educational Loan Exhibition

1941

As a curator and a writer, Duncan Phillips explored the infinite uses of color in art to signal interrelated elements, forms, and emotions. *The Functions of Color in Painting: An Educational Loan Exhibition*, co-curated with artist C. Law Watkins, hosted groupings of paintings throughout the museum's

galleries, hallways, and stairwells, complete with group labels and catalogue essays. Bonnard and his American contemporaries were exhibited in various themed galleries alongside leading figures of Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, and Cubism.

## Catalogue



One of the painter's best opportunities for emotional color is his discovery of the subtle relation between a season and a state of mind. In Bonnard's *Early Spring* the indefinably nostalgic harmony of grays and greens matches a quickened emotional sensation of moody hours when the air is redolent of young leaves, of fresh flowers and of fitful rain. Bonnard's color suggests the restlessness, the strange blend of ecstasy and melancholy which makes us more earth-conscious and aware of growing things in April than at any other time of the year.

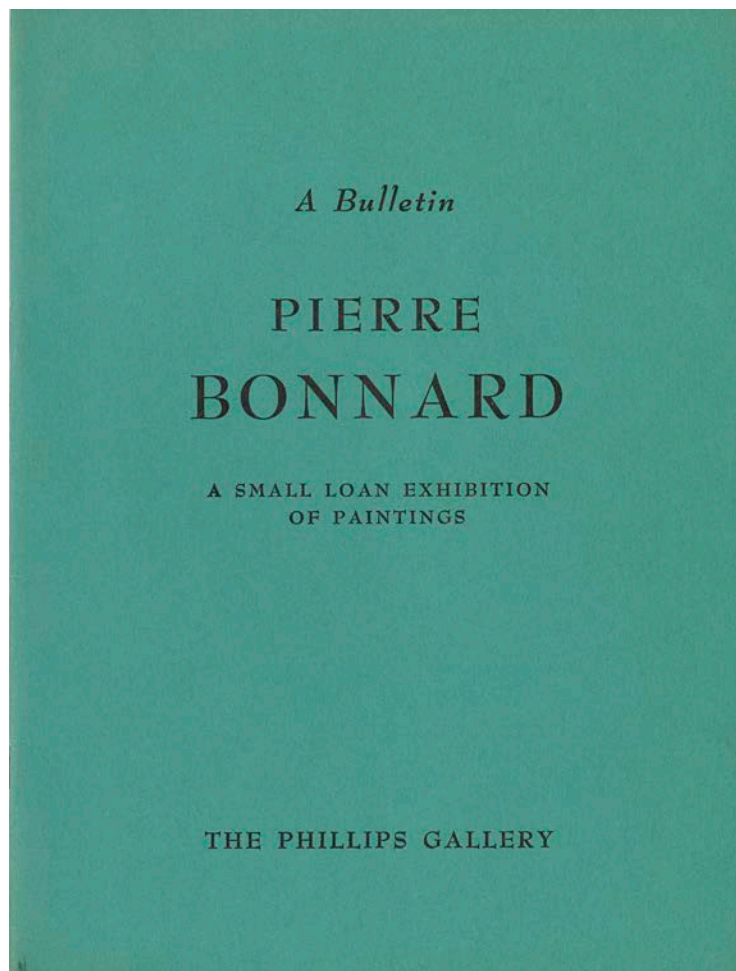


# Pierre Bonnard: A Small Loan Exhibition of Paintings

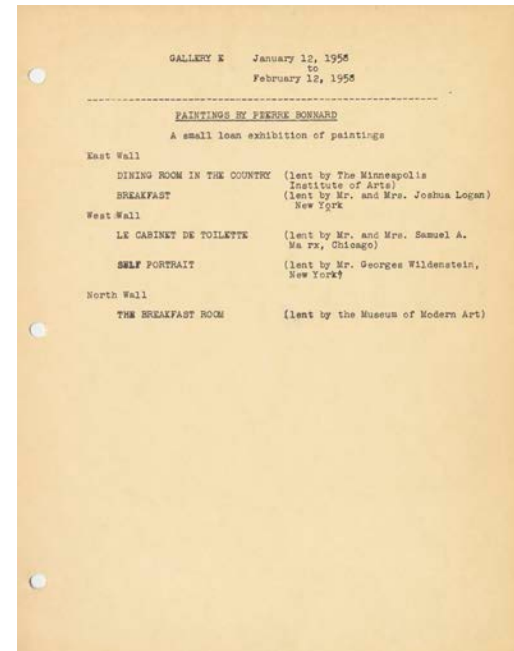
1958

For The Phillips Collection's posthumous exhibition of Pierre Bonnard's paintings, Duncan Phillips reprinted his biographical essay, originally published in the 1949 autumn issue of the *Kenyon Review*, for the catalogue. The loan exhibition gathered six of the "best Bonnards owned in America," spanning from 1913 to the late 1930's.

## Exhibition Catalogue



## Gallery E, hanging record



# One-Painting Loan Exhibition: The Circus Horse

1965

On several occasions the Phillips chose to display and announce single painting exhibitions for Bonnard, a method typically utilized at the gallery for old and modern masters including Rembrandt, Picasso, and Braque.

*The Circus Horse* (1946) was one of the most sought after Bonnard paintings by Duncan and Marjorie Phillips. At the end of 1964 Duncan wrote to Bonnard's nephew, Charles Terrasse, renewing a request to loan *The Circus Horse* for a one painting exhibition. Terrasse loaned the work for the first time to the Phillips for the 1965 winter show.

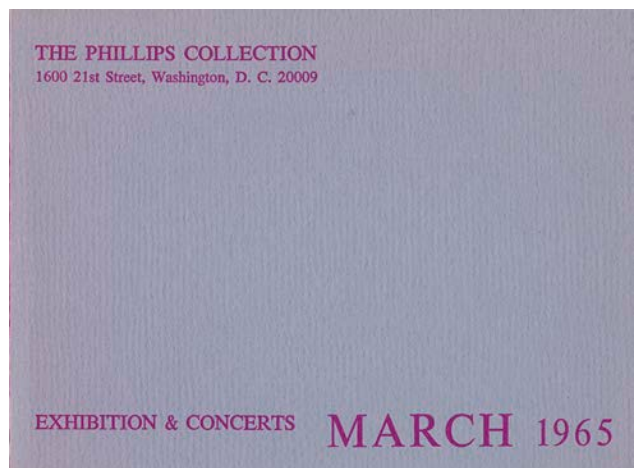
“... a unique masterpiece, unique in its melancholy for so blithe an artist. It is profoundly moving with a melancholy of introspection and self portraiture and a compassionate tenderness.

DUNCAN PHILLIPS

“Pierre Bonnard”, *The Kenyon Review* 11, no. 4 (1949): 561-66.)



Gallery 6 with *The Circus Horse*



Announcement

EXHIBITION  
Through March 29

THE PHILLIPS COLLECTION

A one-painting  
LOAN EXHIBITION

THE CIRCUS HORSE, 1946  
by PIERRE BONNARD  
IN GALLERY VI, 1612 21ST STREET

This painting loaned through the kindness of Mr. Charles Terrasse, nephew of Pierre Bonnard.

CONCERTS

Sunday afternoon, March 7 at 5:00  
SONG RECITAL: Joy Davidson, mezzo;  
Charles Wadsworth, piano; George Steiner, viola.

Monday evening, March 8 at 8:30  
CELLO RECITAL: Lucien de Grootte, cello;  
Adolf Drescher, piano.

Sunday afternoon, March 21 at 5:00  
ALL BACH PROGRAM: Robert Parris, harpsichord;  
Joel Berman, viola.

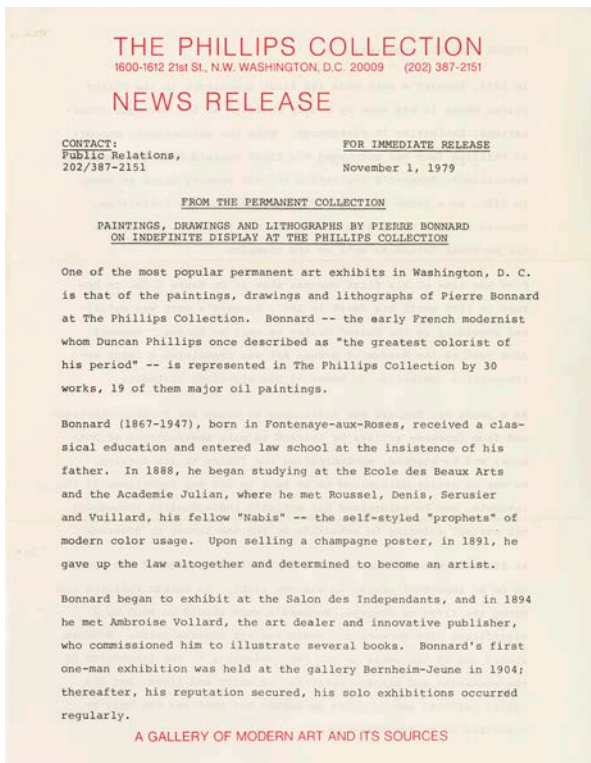
Monday evening, March 22 at 8:30  
SONG RECITAL: Jane White, soprano; Warren Thew, piano.

Sunday afternoon, March 28 at 5:00  
IOWA STRING QUARTET: Allen Ohmes, violin;  
John Ferrell, violin; William Preucil, viola; Joel Krosnick, cello.

1600 - 1612 Twenty-first Street, N.W. Washington, D. C.



# Press Release & Monograph



## “Paintings, Drawings and Lithographs by Pierre Bonnard on Indefinite Display at The Phillips Collection,” Press Release

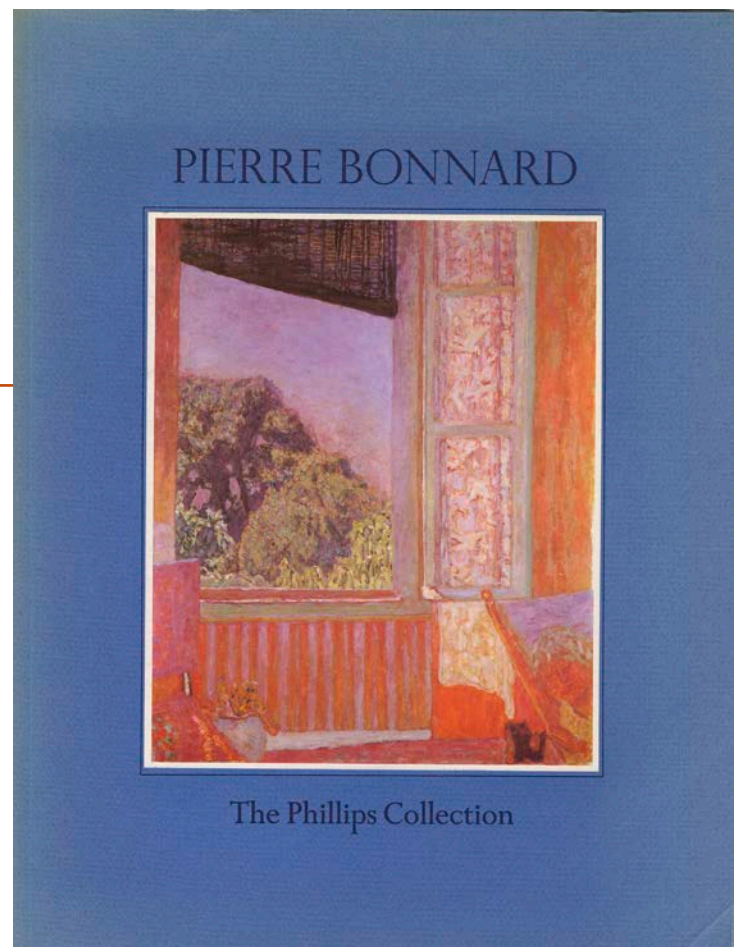
NOVEMBER 1, 1979

In the 1970s, Laughlin Phillips (Duncan and Marjorie’s son, who became director in 1972) led the The Phillips Collection in a new direction, beginning with streamlined press releases issued by the newly formed Public Relations department. The November 1, 1979, release announced a hanging of Bonnard’s paintings and graphic works, as well as a monograph on the artist published by the museum and the Artist’s Limited Editions, Inc. The publication was a part of the *Medaenas Monograph on the Arts* limited edition series.

“ Significant portions of The Phillips Collection’s holdings of paintings, drawings and lithographs by Pierre Bonnard are always on view, Tuesday through Saturday, from 10 am until 5 pm and on Sunday from 2 until 7 pm.  
DUNCAN PHILLIPS

### ***Pierre Bonnard: A selection of paintings from the Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C. and the collection of Mrs. Duncan Phillips of Medaenas Monographs on the Arts***

compiled and edited by Willem de Looper and Kevin Grogan, Artist’s Ltd. Edition, Mount Vernon, N.Y., 1979



# Pierre Bonnard: The Late Paintings

1984

Beginning in 1981, the Public Affairs office developed standardized press kits for special exhibitions complete with brochures, posters, program listings, press releases, fact sheets, event invitations, and catalogue excerpts. Marketing for exhibitions was also expanded to include Metro ads and audiovisual presentations. *Pierre Bonnard: The Late Paintings* generated a significant amount of marketing materials and was considered by Director of Public Affairs Laurie Lester as “a real celebration in terms of how we feted the general public.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>“Laurie Lester oral history interview conducted by Sheree Scarborough, 2017.” From The Phillips Collection Library and Archives.

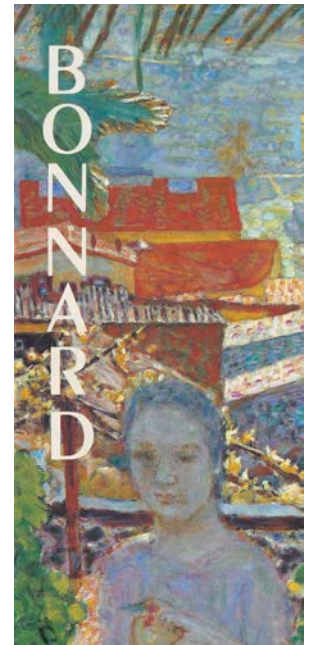
## Bonnard Update

### An Update on the Bonnard Exhibition

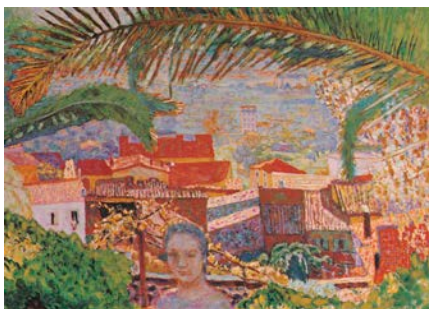
*Pierre Bonnard: The Late Paintings*, the exhibition co-organized by The Centre Pompidou in Paris, The Phillips Collection in Washington, and the Dallas Museum of Art, proved to be a tremendously successful exhibition for each museum, bringing in unprecedented numbers of visitors at the Centre Pompidou and The Phillips Collection. More than 6,000 people a day visited the exhibition in Paris, totaling 488,200 in 77 days. In Washington, crowds at The Phillips Collection were larger than any since the 1972 Cezanne exhibition and attendance totaled 69,026 in eleven weeks – almost two thirds the museum’s annual attendance. In the eight weeks that the Bonnard exhibition was in Dallas, it was seen by 56,100 people.

The local costs of the Bonnard exhibition were met through the contributions received from Patrons of The Phillips Collection, a newly-formed organization whose 107 members contributed more than \$195,000 during the 1983-84 season. Each year, gifts from the Patrons will be used in support of an exhibition, scholarly publication, educational project or other worthy, substantive project. In 1985, Patron’s contributions will be used primarily to publish a much-needed Summary Catalogue of the Collection. This book will include basic information about every work held by the museum in its permanent and study collections and will be an important resource for art historians, museum professionals, and libraries throughout the world. Additional funds from the Patrons will be used in support of an exhibition of the paintings and prints of Miklos Pogany – an exhibition which continues the tradition of The Phillips Collection’s support of emerging artists. The Pogany exhibition will be at The Phillips Collection from March 30 – May 26, 1984.

## Brochure



## Reception Invitation



PIERRE  
BONNARD:  
THE  
LATE  
PAINTINGS



The Phillips Collection

*invites you to a special reception for the exhibition*

**Pierre Bonnard: The Late Paintings**  
**June 9—August 25, 1984**

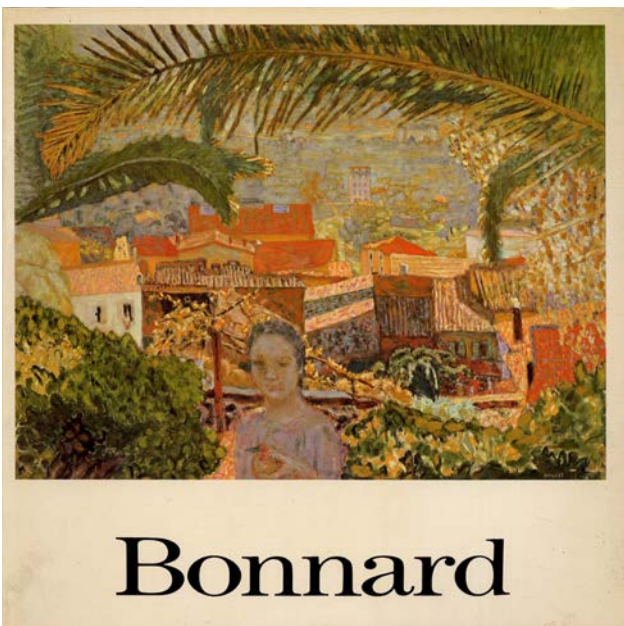
This exhibition is made possible by grants from the IBM Corporation and the National Endowment for the Arts. An indemnity has been granted by the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities. The presentation of this exhibition in Washington has received further support from The 1984 Patrons of The Phillips Collection.

Friday, the eighth of June 1984  
from five until nine o'clock  
1600 Twenty-first Street NW Washington, DC

*This invitation admits two, please present it at the door.  
Cash bar.*



Annex exterior with banner, ca. 1984



Exhibition catalogue

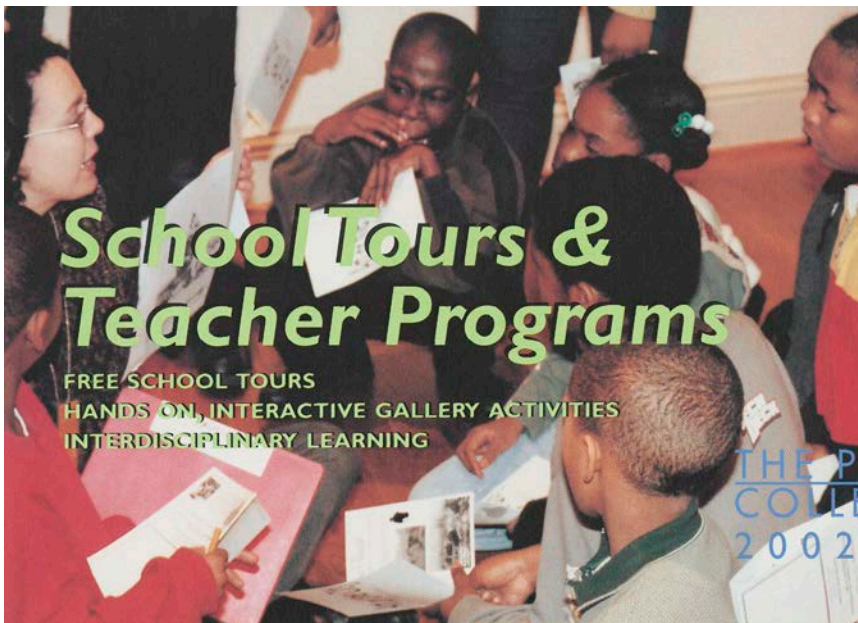
# Pierre Bonnard: Early and Late

2002

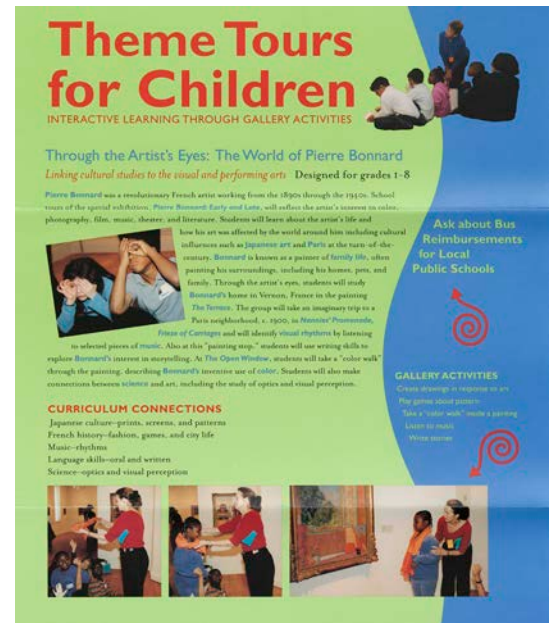
For *Pierre Bonnard: Early and Late* over sixty years of Bonnard's art was hung throughout the Phillips House galleries. The exhibition featured an audio guide and a selection of themed tours available for school groups. The catalogue included essays by Bonnard's great nephews, Michel and Antoine Terrasse, at the request of Phillips Director Jay Gates and Senior Curator Elizabeth Hutton Turner.



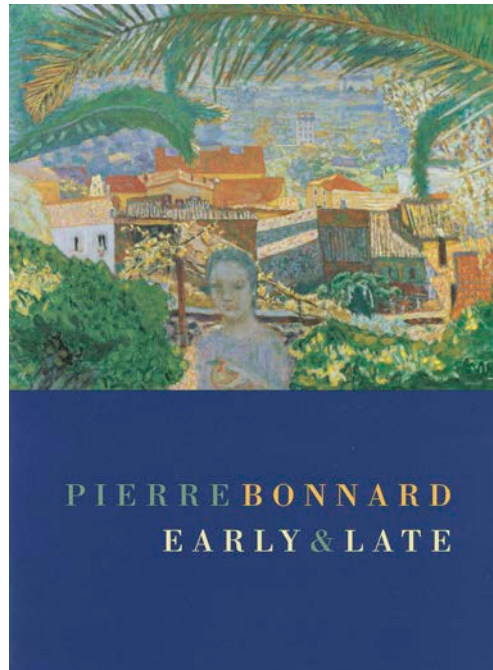
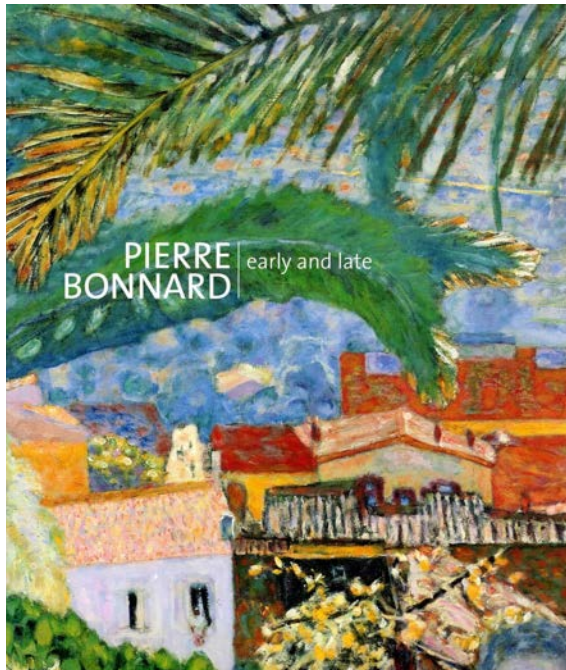
Brochure



Education Brochure Cover



Education Brochure



Newsletter



PROGRAMS

## Special Events

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FOCUSING ON PIERRE BONNARD

Pierre Bonnard (1869-1947), *Le Grand-Lemps. The Gathering of Fruit, Andre Torrens, an Unknown Child and in the Background, Renee*, 1894-1901. Contemporary print by Patrice Schmidt from original film negative, 2002; Musée d'Orsay, Paris, donation with a life interest from Charles Terrasse's children, 1972, inv. PHO 1972 34 35.

**The Imaginary Cinema of Pierre Bonnard**  
 In this special gallery presentation, Dr. Elizabeth Hutton Turner, senior curator of The Phillips Collection and curator of the exhibition, will guide participants through *Pierre Bonnard: Early and Late*. Dr. Turner will explore the ways in which inventions in photography and film provided important points of departure for Bonnard's aesthetic innovations in light and color.  
 Please note, this "Curator's Perspective" gallery talk will take place in the *Bonnard* exhibition and therefore will require a special exhibition ticket for this Artful Evening event.

**Slide Lecture**  
*Bonnard: A New Space for the Self*  
 In Bonnard's later work, the spectator is "made to stand where he stood, to move as he moved...centered on the exceptional moment..."  
 British painter and writer Timothy Hyman published his widely praised monograph *Bonnard* (Thames and Hudson) in 1998. His slide lecture will explore the psychological and perceptual complexity of this great, often misunderstood, master.

**RESTAURANT DEMONSTRATION & TASTING**

**A Journey Around the Mediterranean**  
 Restaurant Seven is a contemporary American restaurant featuring the bounty of the region with a Mediterranean accent. Executive Chef Mina Newman will speak about her eight month sojourn around the Mediterranean and the foods of the region. Please join us for a demonstration on preserving lemons, compliments of Restaurant Seven.

**DATE:** Thursday, September 26, 2002  
**TIME:** 6 pm, repeated at 7 pm  
**PLACE:** Foyer, Original Building Bonnard exhibition  
**FEES:** Free with admission to special exhibition. Space is limited.

**DATE:** Wednesday, October 6, 2002  
**TIME:** 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm  
**PLACE:** Music Room, Original Building  
**FEES:** \$6 Members, \$10 Non-members  
 See p. 8 for information on a post-event reception for Friend and Patron Members. For information, please call (202) 387-3056.

**DATE:** Thursday, October 17, 2002  
**TIME:** 6:30 pm  
**PLACE:** First Floor, Goh Annex  
**FEES:** Free with admission.

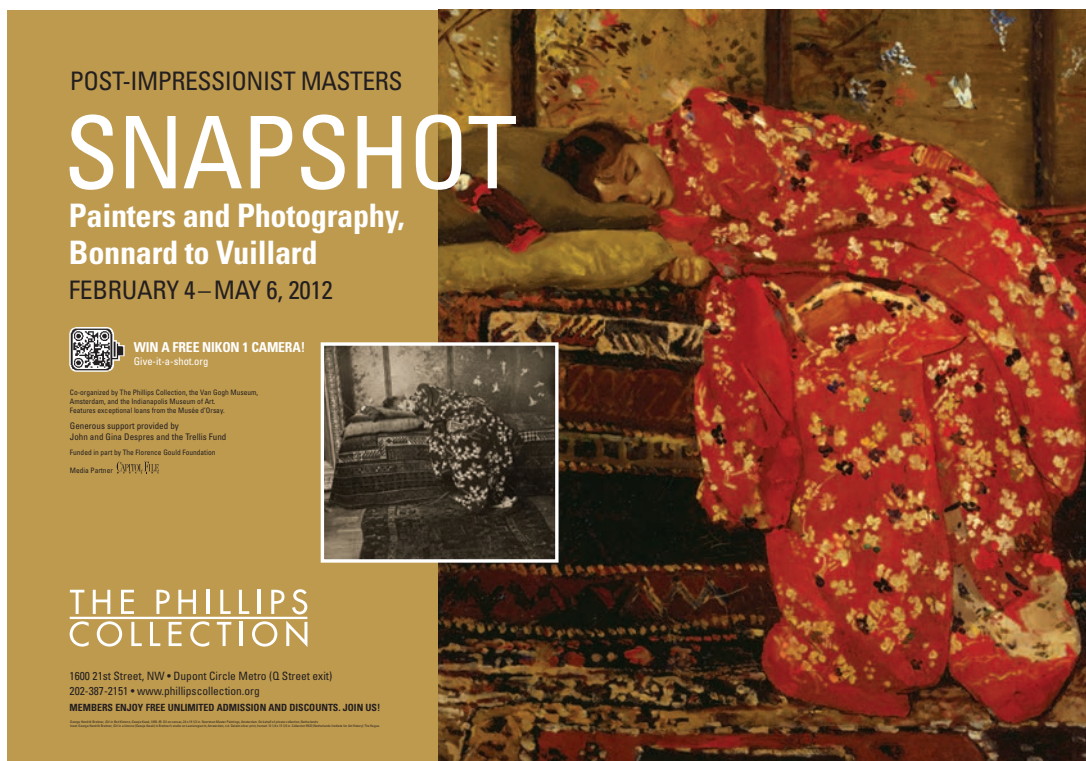
THE PHILLIPS COLLECTION 5

# Snapshot: Painters and Photography, Bonnard to Vuillard

2012

*Snapshot: Painters and Photography, Bonnard to Vuillard* explored Nabis artists' connection to the lens. In tandem, visitors were invited to participate in two contests. Designed to

empower audiences to co-create with the museum, guests reimagined compositions and explored themes from the exhibition through their own photography and videos.



Rack Card



Banner

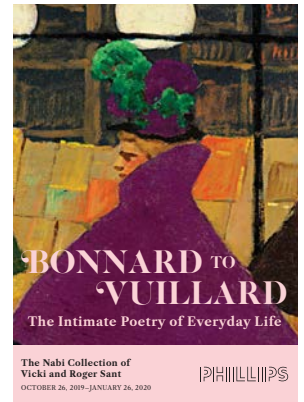
# *Bonnard to Vuillard:* *The Intimate Poetry of Everyday Life—* *The Nabi Collection of Vicki and Roger Sant*

2019

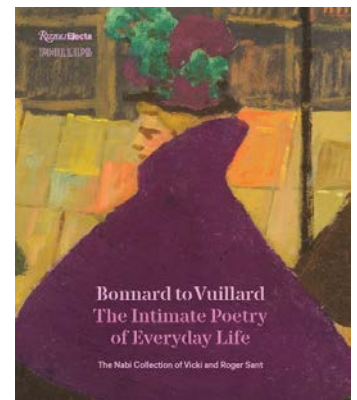
The exhibition, drawn from the promised gift to the Phillips from the collection of Vicki and Roger Sant, explores rarely-seen works by some of the international group's leading figures, including Pierre Bonnard, Édouard Vuillard, Maurice Denis, Aristide Maillol, Paul Ranson, Ker-Xavier Roussel, and Félix Vallotton. From painting and prints to stained glass, screens, tapestry, and ceramics, the works exemplify how the Nabis employed flat colors, decorative patterning, and silhouetted forms to convey their responses to the world.

In an effort to mirror the intimate nature captured in the works of Bonnard and his contemporaries, the exhibition featured a small, decorated sitting room. The space, much like the 2024 Bonnard Salon, was meant for visitors to slow down, reflect on the exhibition, and engage with materials integral to understanding the impact of Bonnard on The Phillips Collection and the art world.

Opening Invitation



Exhibition Catalogue



PHILLIPS